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FOREIGNERS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS INDONESIAN CULTURE: A PIECE OF STUDY ON CCU

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Abstract

Culture is never-ended and interesting topic to discuss. This study attempts to examine the opinion of foreigners towards Indonesian culture including language, having parties, invitations, getting attention, giving gifts, and so on. There are statements about life style including habit and language used in Indonesia that should be responded by respondents. The respondents are Darmasiswa students, those who got scholarship from Indonesian government to learn bahasa Indonesia and culture in Indonesia. They have averagely stayed in Indonesia for at least nine months. The finding is that there are some aspects of Indonesian culture welcomed by foreigners, whereas the others are not.

Key words: culture, CCU, life style, Darmasiswa students

Introduction

People from different cultures inhabit different sensory realities. They see, hear, feel, and smell only that which has some meaning or importance for them. Whatever fits into their personal world of recognition, they would like to abstract and then interpret it through the frame of reference of their own culture

Review on Indonesian Culture

The following are forty statements about Indonesian Culture adopted from "Culture Shock : A Guide to Customs and Etiquette (pp. 266-269)

1. Affection or touching between the sexes is NOT a public event. However, Indonesians of the same sex will typically walk hand in hand or arm in arm.
2. Anger is best kept in check. Angry noises, angry gestures and temper displays are very offensive to Indonesians and can cause you loss of respect. Work off these emotions with a hard game of tennis or running or squash.
3. Babies are adored and cherished. Every Indonesian wants to be complimented on his children. Your small children will also have attention lavished on them. Accept this graciously; the affection is genuine.
4. Bargaining is more than negotiating a discount on purchase. It is primarily a social occasion that is anticipated, shared and enjoyed.
5. Bathrooms are utilitarian and wet. Educate yourself about water dippers and *mandis* and ceramic footprints before the need arises. Do not expect toilet paper to be provided. Small children should be told what to expect.
6. Criticism should be avoided! If it must be given, it should be well disguised and very subtle. Criticism is never directed at the individual personally. It is never delivered in public or with observers.
7. Discretion is appreciated in your public/ private life. It is important for the preservation of calm.